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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6888
INFO RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6975
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 7952
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JUL LIMA 4026
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 9345
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 4673
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 3611
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEAWJC/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHOND/DIRONDCP WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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SUBJECT: NATIONAL POLICE RURAL SECURITY STRATEGY TO MONITOR
DEMOBILIZED

SUMMARY

1. (U) At a recent conference, Colombian National Police (CNP) Director General Jorge Castro outlined the CNP's strategy to monitor demobilized paramilitaries in rural areas, protect the civilian population and dismantle new criminal groups. Castro plans to open 400 police substations in the most vulnerable areas of the country by 2010. On July 7, the CNP released its first report on these efforts, which highlighted progress but also noted problems in criminal behavior by former combatants. End summary.

NATIONAL POLICE STRATEGY FOR RURAL SECURITY

2. (U) General Castro discussed police strategy to dismantle emerging criminal groups formed by demobilized paramilitaries during a mid-June seminar sponsored by Semana Magazine and Ideas for Peace Foundation. Castro said rural insecurity is primarily concentrated in the Departments of Norte de Santander, Bolivar, and Narino, areas that have historically lacked an effective state presence. He added that these regions suffer from drug cultivation and trafficking, transit corridors for illegal armed groups, forced displacement, infrastructure attacks, and extortion.

3. (U) Castro said the CNP has already established forty-eight substations in zones of former paramilitary influence to prevent the demobilized from forming criminal groups. Castro hopes to add 50 more substations by the end of 2006, and another 308 by 2010. This would amount to 40,000 rural police. Castro said the CNP was also creating a database of the demobilized paramilitaries to track their activities.

4. (U) The rural police, or carabineros,8 will protect local communities, conduct criminal investigations, secure roads and waterways, collect intelligence, provide security for economic development projects, and assist in eradicating illicit crops. Their work is designed to foster confidence in government institutions in these remote areas. In addition to the "carabineros," the CNP installed 165 new police stations around the country. The CNP created 54 Mobile Squadrons - charged with blocking FARC transit corridors - and 68 rapid reaction units to support the

highway patrol. Castro also plans to fortify and increase the number of officers in police stations with less than 20 men.

MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF REINSERTION

15. (U) The CNP report stated that many demobilized paramilitaries are cooperating with authorities -- providing information that has led to preventing terrorist activities and the discovery of common graves of paramilitary victims. The latter is especially important to reparations and accounting for the disappeared. The report also outlined the challenges Colombia faces in reincorporating the demobilized into society. Ex-combatants have been arrested on charges ranging from assault and extortion to illegal possession of arms and murder (536 for weapons charges, assault, and extortion; 70 for murder). The CNP reported that 236 have been killed, 141 have not had any contact with the GOC's Reinsertion Program since they demobilized, and only 16 percent were working. The police estimated that 2,400 demobilized have joined criminal groups. Of the 41,000 demobilized, 5,692 have received job training from the CNP and 4,402 of those are working full time.

WOOD